

Chapter 2: Goals, Objectives and Policies

Compilation of Staff's Proposed Amendments for September 25th, 2008 City Council

1.) Policy 214.1

Policy 214.1 Existing ~~manpower employment~~ training programs should be continued, expanded and their effectiveness measured.

1st
reading

~~For instance, the City of Austin administers a federally funded manpower training program designed to provide job training to all eligible applicants in the Austin area. This program should be continued. Additional funding should be sought.~~

No training programs currently exist. Deletion of "manpower" and subsequent paragraph by consensus.

Policy 214.1 Existing ~~manpower employment~~ training programs should be continued, expanded and their effectiveness measured.

2nd
reading

~~For instance, the City of Austin administers a federally funded manpower training program designed to provide job training to all eligible applicants in the Austin area. This program should be continued. Additional funding should be sought.~~

The federal manpower training program no longer exists. The City of Austin provides funding to Skillpoint Alliance: a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that builds partnerships among industry, education and the community to foster college and career success for Central Texans, while meeting employers' needs for a qualified workforce. The contract is currently managed by the City of Austin's Economic Growth and Redevelopment Services Offices. The goal of Skillpoint Alliance is to encourage life-long learning, improve career opportunities and build self-sufficiency while strengthening Central Texas as a region that attracts and retains good jobs.

2.) Policy 215.1

Policy 215.1 Job opportunities for low skill, low income persons should be made easily accessible through inexpensive public and/or private ~~mass transportation~~public transit.

1st
reading

Underskilled persons face many barriers to employment but accessibility is one that can be resolved with relative ease through the provision of an adequate, inexpensive ~~mass-public~~ transportation system.

Deleted 'mass transportation' and replaced with 'public transit' based on consensus.

Policy 215.1 *Job opportunities for low skill, low income persons should be made easily accessible through inexpensive public and/or private ~~mass~~ transportation.*

2nd
reading

Underskilled persons face many barriers to employment but accessibility is one that can be resolved with relative ease through the provision of an adequate, inexpensive ~~mass~~ transportation system.

Deleted 'mass' based on consensus.

3.) Policy 322.7

Policy 322.7 *Strengthen the septic tank ordinance.*

1st
reading

The soils in most of Travis County offer severe limitations to the proper functioning of septic tank systems. The use of septic tanks in these areas has long been recognized as a threat to the quality of both surface and ground water. Austin has an obligation to abate water pollution within its regulatory control area.

~~No subdivision application should be approved where plans stipulate the use of septic tank systems in poorly suited areas. The City should permit the use of established or experimental alternative waste treatment systems to determine their suitability for further use.~~

Policy 322.7 *Strengthen the septic tank ordinance.*

2nd
reading

The soils in most of Travis County offer severe limitations to the proper functioning of septic tank systems. The use of septic tanks in these areas has long been recognized as a threat to the quality of both surface and ground water. Austin has an obligation to abate water pollution within its regulatory control area.

~~No subdivision application should be approved where plans stipulate the use of septic tank systems in poorly suited areas. The City should permit the use of established or experimental alternative waste treatment systems to determine their suitability for further use.~~

The City of Austin is an Authorized Agent of The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) and the Water Utility is a Designated Representative to administer the On-Site Sewage Facilities (OSSF) Program. The TCEQ was previously named the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC). The program falls primarily under the authority of TCEQ rules contained within 30 TAC Ch.285 On-Site Sewage Facilities. Additional regulatory authority is derived from Texas Health and Safety Code, Title 5, Section C, Ch. 341 and Section D, Ch. 366 of Sanitation and Environmental Quality. The City Ordinance No. 990211-E and the City Code, Ch.15-5, adopt the current Ch. 285 as its local rule.

4.) Policy 363.5

Policy 363.5 Reduce emission from off-road mobile sources.

1st
reading

Policy 363.5 added by consensus. Because lawnmower engines are not subject to on-road regulations for efficiency, they are often surprisingly bad polluters. Electric and propane lawn equipment are better alternatives.

Policy 363.5 Reduce emission from off-road mobile sources.

2nd
reading

The City funds an incentive program through Austin Energy to encourage citizens to trade high-polluting, gas-powered lawnmowers for new electric models. Rebates are offered periodically. Lawnmower engines are not subject to on-road regulations for efficiency; they are often surprisingly bad polluters. Electric and propane lawn equipment are better alternatives. Policy addition also addresses the Austin Climate Protection Plan which is supported by Resolution 20070215-023.

5.) Policy 364.1

Policy 364.1 Conduct outreach to residents and local businesses to encourage the use of alternative modes of transportations and other ozone-reducing activities.

1st
reading

Policy 364.1 Conduct outreach to residents and local businesses to encourage the use of alternative modes of transportations and other ozone-reducing activities.

2nd
reading

Objective added to address the Austin Climate Protection Plan which is supported by Resolution 20070215-023. The objective promotes ozone reduction by educating the public about the role their actions play in improving area air quality.

6.) Policy 364.2

Policy 364.2 Contact private and public entities with the objective of coordinating voluntary air quality strategies for constructing equipment operating within the Austin Area.

1st
reading

Policy 364.2 Contact private and public entities with the objective of coordinating voluntary air quality strategies for constructing equipment operating within the Austin Area.

2nd
reading

Objective added to address the Austin Climate Protection Plan which is supported by Resolution 20070215-023. The objective promotes ozone reduction by educating the public about the role their actions play in improving area air quality.

7.) Policy 364.3

Policy 364.3 Promote voluntary idling restrictions.

1st
reading

Policy 364.3 Promote voluntary idling restrictions.

2nd
reading

Objective added to address the Austin Climate Protection Plan which is supported by Resolution 20070215-023. The objective promotes ozone reduction by educating the public about the role their actions play in improving area air quality.

8.) Policy 364.4

Policy 364.4 Coordinate an ozone action day notification and response system.

1st
reading

Policy 364.4 Coordinate an ozone action day notification and response system.

2nd
reading

Objective added to address the Austin Climate Protection Plan which is supported by Resolution 20070215-023. The objective promotes ozone reduction by educating the public about the role their actions play in improving area air quality.

9.) Objective 412.0

Objective 412.0 ~~Actively pursue programs to promote energy and resource conservation.~~ Pursue opportunities to support the Zero Waste plan for the City of Austin to include education outreach, community participation, and other programs that promote energy conservation, greenhouse gas reduction, and renewable energy resources.

1st
reading

Zero Waste plan policy supported by consensus. Energy and greenhouse gas language drawn from the Austin Climate Protection Plan.

Objective 412.0 ~~Actively pursue programs to promote energy and resource conservation.~~ Pursue opportunities to support the Zero Waste plan for the City of Austin to include education outreach, community participation, and other programs that promote energy conservation, greenhouse gas reduction, renewable energy resources, and resource conservation.

2nd
reading

Austin's Zero Waste Plan will take into consideration Austin's current and planned public and private solid waste infrastructure, as well as our city's Climate Protection Program. Recommendations developed through this process are integral to achieve the U.N. Urban Environmental Accord's goal to reduce by 20% the per capita solid waste disposal to landfills by 2012 and zero waste by 2040. Energy and greenhouse gas language is drawn from the Austin Climate Protection Plan which is supported by Resolution 20070215-023.

10.) Policy 412.7

Policy 412.7 *Continue to investigate ~~the feasibility of alternatives for the disposal of solid waste~~ and promote alternatives to land filling solid waste.*

1st
reading

Currently the majority of Austin's solid waste is disposed of in sanitary landfills. It is recommended ~~that portions of solid waste be recovered for the recycling of metals and minerals, the burning of waste materials as electric energy fuel or the use of solid waste for soil conditioning to continue enhancement of the current diversion programs, as well as implement other programs focused on source reduction, resource re-use, recycling, and composting. Help to educate the City of Austin on Zero Waste Policy initiative, continue use of green waste, and look for ways to enhance this market within the City and the Central Texas Region.~~

Policy language by consensus. Change to explanation necessary to include all of Solid Waste Services recycling activities (recycling collection, yard trimming collection, large brush collection, bulk collection, etc). These materials are taken to different disposal sites and not landfills.

Policy 412.7 *Continue to investigate ~~the feasibility of alternatives for the disposal of solid waste~~ and promote alternatives to land filling solid waste.*

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11.) Policy 413.1

Policy 413.1 *Develop a phased, long range program of water and wastewater services to promote compact, contiguous and planned growth in the City's Desired Development Zone.*

1st
reading

Since development decisions are often made well in advance of actual construction, a long range utility extension program addressing the location of major water and wastewater facilities should be prepared and adopted by the City Council. This would be used as a guide for the Capital Improvements Program, funding for which is approved by City Council annually through the budget process. It would coordinate, at the policy level, water, wastewater and other facility expansion plans.

Austin City Code Chapters 2-14, 25-1, and 25-9 and the City's annual budget ordinance support the policy revisions.

Policy 413.1 *Develop a phased, long range program of water and wastewater services to promote compact, contiguous and planned growth, particularly in the City's Desired Development Zone.*

2nd
reading

Since development decisions are often made well in advance of actual construction, a long range utility extension program addressing the location of major water and wastewater facilities should be prepared and adopted by the City Council. This would be used as a guide for the Capital Improvements Program, funding for which is approved by City Council annually through the budget process. It would coordinate, at the policy level, water, wastewater and other facility expansion plans.

Austin City Code Chapters 2-14, 25-1, and 25-9 and the City's annual budget ordinance support the policy revisions.

12.) Policy 421.4

Policy 421.4 ~~Investigate the feasibility of a joint City/County fire protection system. Continue to coordinate and work with surrounding municipal and county emergency service agencies to ensure the highest level of service is provided to all citizens.~~

1st
reading

~~There has been considerable urban development in recent years outside of Austin in rural portions of Travis County. Most of these are now served by volunteer fire departments. Consideration should be given to a cooperative program of fire protection for areas outside the city, provided each area covers its full costs for that service.~~

Change by consensus.

Policy 421.4 ~~Investigate the feasibility of a joint City/County fire protection system. Continue to coordinate and work with surrounding municipal and county emergency service agencies to ensure the highest level of service is provided to all citizens.~~

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~~There has been considerable urban development in recent years outside of Austin in rural portions of Travis County. Most of these are now served by volunteer fire departments. Consideration should be given to a cooperative program of fire protection for areas outside the city, provided each area covers its full costs for that service.~~

The Austin-Travis County EMS (A/TCEMS) Department is the primary provider for medical rescue within the City of Austin and Travis County. A/TCEMS is supported in its operation by 18 first response agencies and 16 corporate first response teams. Outside the city limits, within Travis County, responsibilities for first response are shared among EMS/Fire agencies (both volunteer and paid). The City of Austin EMS Department expanded its services to include all of Travis County under an Interlocal Governmental Agreement beginning May of 1977. After an exhaustive assessment by A/TCEMS System stakeholders (1998-2001) regarding which government should host the A/TCEMS Department, it was recommended that the City of Austin continue in its current role as the managing entity for A/TCEMS. Under an expanded interlocal governmental agreement, Travis County formally transferred all of its EMS related administrative duties to the City of Austin EMS Department to streamline operations and minimize duplications in administrative process. The EMS Communication Center is located within the Combined Transportation Emergency & Communications Center (CTECC); all City/County 911 calls for EMS assistance are processed through this center.

13.) Policy 422.1

Policy 422.1 *Periodically update the Library Facilities Master Plan to provide adequate central, ~~regional and neighborhood~~resource and branch library facilities.*

1st
reading

Change by consensus.

Policy 422.1 *Periodically update the Library Facilities Master Plan to provide adequate central, ~~regional and neighborhood~~resource and branch library facilities.*

2nd
reading

Council Resolution 010301-20 supported the funding and creation of the Austin Public Library Facilities Master Plan which is currently utilized.

14.) Policy 441.3

Policy 441.3 *Stabilize taxes on residential property in older neighborhoods through improved zoning controls.*

1st
reading

In many older neighborhoods undergoing some transition in land use, the potential or residential land for higher intensity use increases land value. This, in turn, increases property taxes. Speculative increases can be minimized by protecting neighborhoods through improved zoning controls, as discussed in Policy 411.2.

Policy 441.3 *Stabilize taxes on residential property in older neighborhoods through improved zoning controls.*

2nd
reading

In many older neighborhoods undergoing some transition in land use, the potential or residential land for higher intensity use increases land value. This, in turn, increases property taxes. Speculative increases can be minimized by protecting neighborhoods through improved zoning controls, as discussed in Policy ~~411.2~~511.2.

Policy number changed since Austin Tomorrow referenced the incorrect policy number.

15.) Policy 511.4

Policy 511.4 *Expand notification for proposed zoning changes.*

1st
reading

The number of area residents who are notified of a proposed zoning change should be increased. Renters should also be notified by the most practical means available. The procedures that notify neighborhood residents of proposed zoning changes should strive to be timely and accurate. Area residents notified of a proposed zoning change should also include neighborhood associations, homeowner associations, businesses, and other neighborhood stakeholders.

Policy addition based on zoning process adopted in S.M.A.R.T. (Safe, Mixed Income, Accessible, Reasonably Priced, Transit Oriented) Housing Policy Resource Guide.

Policy 511.4 *Expand notification for proposed zoning changes.*

2nd
reading

The number of area residents who are notified of a proposed zoning change should be increased. Renters should also be notified by the most practical means available. The procedures that notify neighborhood residents of proposed zoning changes should strive to be timely and accurate. Area residents notified of a proposed zoning change should also include neighborhood associations, homeowner associations, businesses, and other neighborhood stakeholders.

Policy addition based on zoning process adopted in S.M.A.R.T. (Safe, Mixed Income, Accessible, Reasonably Priced, Transit Oriented) Housing Policy Resource Guide. The S.M.A.R.T. Housing policy initiative is designed to stimulate the production of affordable housing for low and moderate income residents of Austin. Through the S.M.A.R.T. Housing policy, the City of Austin provides fee waivers and S.M.A.R.T. Housing development review, typically faster than conventional review. This initiative applies to new single-family, multi-family and infill development.

16.) Policy 512.3

Policy 512.3 ~~Develop a Housing Information System to m~~Monitor housing conditions, supply and deterioration trends, and to evaluate the effectiveness of housing programs and the preservation of affordable housing.

1st
reading

A continuing source of up-to-date information regarding housing condition is essential for meeting city-wide housing needs. Adequate funds should be provided to maintain a continuous survey and review of housing characteristics and their effect on residents. Such surveys would provide a basis for determining program target areas and for assessing the impact of programs on the city's housing supply. A continuing source of up-to-date information regarding expiring state- and federally-assisted affordable rental properties is highly recommended and would impede the future loss of affordable housing to market conditions.

Charts are updated as part of the Annual Plan.

Policy 512.3 ~~Develop a Housing Information System to m~~Monitor housing conditions, supply and deterioration trends, and ~~to evaluate~~ the effectiveness of housing programs and the preservation of affordable housing.

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Charts are updated as part of the Annual Plan.

17.) Policy 521.1

Policy 521.1 *Adopt and enforce a Fair Housing Program.*

1st
reading

~~The City should seek enactment~~Continue support of ~~a the~~ Fair Housing Ordinance. Effective enforcement of this ordinance by the Human Relations Commission will be the decisive factor in assuring housing availability at fair prices to minority households.

Policy revisions reflect adoption and enforcement of the Fair Housing Ordinance.

Policy 521.1 *Adopt and enforce a Fair Housing Program.*

2nd
reading

~~The City should seek enactment~~Continue support of ~~a the~~ Fair Housing Ordinance. Effective enforcement of this ordinance by the Human ~~Relations~~ Rights Commission will be the decisive factor in assuring housing availability at fair prices to minority households.

Policy revisions reflect adoption and enforcement of the Fair Housing Ordinance.

18.) Policy 623.1

Policy 623.1 *Provide for review by the Parks and Recreation Department of City projects that affect open space and the appearance of the city.*

1st
reading

~~The Parks and Recreation Department should advise and prepare landscape plans for other City of Austin departments to provide for more attractive City facilities.~~

Deleted paragraph by consensus.

Policy 623.1 *Provide for review by the Parks and Recreation Department of City projects that affect open space and the appearance of the city.*

2nd
reading

~~The Parks and Recreation Department should advise and prepare landscape plans for other City of Austin departments to provide for more attractive City facilities.~~

The relative operational capacity of various City departments is the responsibility of the City Manager.

19.) Policy 713.6

Policy 713.6 *Develop a community-wide bikeway network based on a comprehensive plan which includes, where appropriate, hard surface bike trails along linear parks and creeks.*

1st
reading

Addition based on existence of Austin Bicycle Plan supported by City Council Ordinance 960411-E and 980507-D. The Parks Master Plan should be cross-referenced here, to the extent their trail/linear park system also serves as a transportation corridor. For example, Shoal Creek Trail, Walnut Creek Trail, Johnson Creek Trail, Waller Creek Trail. The City of Austin Bicycle Plan identifies all existing and planned bicycle facilities.

Policy 713.6 *Develop a community-wide bikeway network based on a comprehensive plan which includes, where appropriate, hard surface bike trails along linear parks and creeks.*

2nd
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Supported by the existence of Austin Bicycle Plan supported by City Council Ordinance 960411-E and 980507-D. The Parks Master Plan should be cross-referenced here, to the extent their trail/linear park system also serves as a

transportation corridor. For example, Shoal Creek Trail, Walnut Creek Trail, Johnson Creek Trail, Waller Creek Trail. The City of Austin Bicycle Plan identifies all existing and planned bicycle facilities.

20.) Policy 713.9

Policy 713.9 *Develop a community-wide bikeway network based on a comprehensive plan which includes hard surface bike trails along linear parks and creeks, bikeway facilities in high traffic volume areas and in all new developments.*

1st
reading

Addition based on existence of Austin Bicycle Plan supported by City Council Ordinance 960411-E and 980507-D. The City of Austin Bicycle Plan identifies all existing and planned bicycle facilities.

Policy 713.9 *Develop a community-wide bikeway network based on a comprehensive plan which includes hard surface bike trails along linear parks and creeks, bikeway facilities in high traffic volume areas and in all new developments.*

2nd
reading

Supported by the existence of Austin Bicycle Plan supported by City Council Ordinance 960411-E and 980507-D. The City of Austin Bicycle Plan identifies all existing and planned bicycle facilities.

21.) Policy 713.11

Policy 713.~~12-11~~ *Establish a comprehensive set of standards which will govern the degree of separation between pedestrian and vehicle movement.*

1st
reading

Addition based on existence of Austin Bicycle Plan and Transportation Criteria Manual Street Design Criteria, Section 7, Bikeways. The Austin Bicycle Plan and the City of Austin Transportation Criteria Manual contain design standards.

Policy 713.~~12-11~~ *Establish a comprehensive set of standards which will govern the degree of separation between pedestrian and vehicle movement.*

2nd
reading

Supported by the existence of Austin Bicycle Plan and Transportation Criteria Manual Street Design Criteria, Section 7, Bikeways. The Austin Bicycle Plan and the City of Austin Transportation Criteria Manual contain design standards.

22.) Policy 813.2

~~Policy 813.2 Improve safety and law enforcement programs.~~

1st
reading

~~Assure equitable law enforcement practices.~~

~~Improve the relations between police, youth and the community, in general.~~

~~Provide police officers with community awareness training.~~

~~Provide higher salaries for police.~~

~~Provide psychological and health care services for all persons suffering from drug and alcohol related problems.~~

~~Policy 813.2 Improve safety and law enforcement programs.~~

2nd
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~~Assure equitable law enforcement practices.~~

~~Improve the relations between police, youth and the community, in general.~~

~~Provide police officers with community awareness training.~~

~~Provide higher salaries for police.~~

~~Provide psychological and health care services for all persons suffering from drug and alcohol related problems.~~

Deleted policy reflected in Interim Update changes to policies 421.1 and 421.4 which speak to safety and law enforcement programs and coordination.

23.) Policy 813.4

~~Policy 813.4 Improve emergency health care.~~

1st
reading

~~Improve emergency ambulance service.~~

~~Expand emergency room service at Brackenridge Hospital. Supplement this service in neighborhood clinics.~~

~~Policy 813.4 Improve emergency health care.~~

2nd
reading

~~Improve emergency ambulance service.~~

~~Expand emergency room service at Brackenridge Hospital. Supplement this service in neighborhood clinics.~~

Deleted policy reflected in Interim Update changes to objective 421.0 and policy 421.1 which speak to emergency services.

24.) Policies 711.2, 711.3, 711.7, 714.1, and 715.4

In each of the listed policies, language has been updated to replace “mass transit” and/or “public transit” with “transit.”